

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 357

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONGEN JERUSALEM

USINT CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 0037

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JO, XF

SUBJECT: HUSSEIN'S GENEVA PROBLEMS

1. GOJ HAS CONFISCATED LATEST EDITION OF LEBANESE WEEKLY AL HAWADITH CONTAINING INTERVIEW IN WHICH KING ALLEGEDLY CRITICIZES EGYPT AND SYRIA FOR OBSTRUCTING WEST BANK SOLUTION. STATEMENT REPORTED ON BBC EVENING JANUARY 3. DUE TO CLOSURE OF GOJ OFFICES FOR "IID, WE ARE UNABLE TO OBTAIN COPY OF ITEM FOR ANALYSIS OF WORDING HOWEVER, OTHER SOURCES CORROBORATE THIS EVIDENCE THAT JORDAN-EGYPTIAN RELATION STEADILY COOLING. VISITING WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT JIM HOAGLAND TOLD EMBOFF THAT SADAT'S PERSONAL SPOKESMAN BASHIR HAD DINNER WITH POST'S PARIS CORRESPONDENT RANDALL NIGHT BEFORE GENEVA TALKS ADJOURNED: BUSHIR TOLD RANDALL THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN EGYPTIAN AND JORDANIAN DELEGATIONS CHARACTERIZED BY CONSTANT DISAGREEMENT. GOJ CABINET MINISTER PROVIDED BRITISH EMBASSY AMMAN WITH IDENTIFICATIONAL ASSESSMENT.

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TICAL ASSESSMENT.

2. APPARENT COOLING IN JORDAN-EGYPT RELATIONS IS UNFORTUNATE BUT ENTIRELY PREDICTABLE COMPLICATION IN EVOLVING PEACE-TALK SCENARIO. LITTLE HAS OCCURRED TO DISPEL LONG-STANDING GOJ FEARS THAT SADAT WOULD SELL JORDAN SHORT FOR SINAI DEAL WITH ISRAELIS. DESPITE SURFACE CORDIALITY SURROUNDING RECENT SYRIAN VISITS BY HUSSEIN AND PRIMIN RIFA'I PLUS FACT THAT SYRIANS SHARE JORDANIAN SUSPICIONS RE EGYPTIAN INTENTIONS, JORDANIAN-SYRIAN RELATIONS ALSO CHARACTERIZED BY MUTUAL DISTRUST. WITHDRAWAL OF JAA SYRIA CONTINGENT PRESUMABLY WILL UNDERMINE FRAGILE DETENTE EVEN FURTHER. ALTHOUGH WE LACK EXTENSIVE EVIDENCE, WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT JORDAN-SAUDI RELATIONS ALSO ARE ON DOWNGRADE, APPARENTLY DUE TO LACK OF SAUDI SUPPORT AT ALGIERS AND IN SUBSEQUENT INTER-ARAB NEGOTIATIONS IN FAVOR OF NEW EGYPTIAN ALLY.

3. IN RELATED DEVELOPMENT WHICH UNDERScores HUSSEIN'S GENEVA PROBLEMS, EMBOFF LEARNED FROM CLOSE MUTUAL FRIEND THAT TRANSPORT MINISTER/CONFERENCE DELEGATE NADIM ZAROU (PALESTINIAN) OPTED OUT OF GOJ DELEGATION AT LAST MOMENT SPECIFICALLY BECAUSE OF FEDAYEEN THREATS AGAINST HIMSELF AND FAMILY MEMBERS. HE DEPARTED FOR HASTILY CONTRIVED FACE-SAVING AQABA VACATION AS OTHER DELEGATES DEPARTED. FACT THAT HE IS SECOND NOMINEE TO SUCCUMB TO FEDAYEEN PRESSURES ILLUSTRATES REGIME'S DIFFICULTIES IN RECRUITING PALESTINIAN SPOKESMEN WHO HAVE CHANCE OF CARRYING ON DIALOGUE WITH PLO.
GRAHAM

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